



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **NASS to Look at Washington Farmers' Production Practices**

Olympia, Washington – How are local farmers being affected by escalating fuel and fertilizer costs? What new production practices are they using to assure a healthy environment and an abundant crop? These and other important questions will be answered when the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts Phase II of the 2006 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

From September to December, NASS will conduct personal interviews with 225 Washington farm operators. Nearly 9,000 farm operators will be contacted nationwide. They will be asked to provide information on their fertilizer, nutrient and pesticide applications, as well as their pest management practices.

"This is the second phase of ARMS, where we focus on production practices. This year, we are looking at Winter Wheat and Spring Wheat," said Chris Messer, Director of the Washington Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, (NASS).

While ARMS is a complex survey, its importance cannot be underestimated, according to Messer. "Virtually every federal farm program and policy relies heavily on ARMS data," she said. "Conservation programs, price support programs, risk management programs, research programs. All utilize ARMS data generated through this survey. That's why it's so important that farmers take the time to participate and ensure that we have the most accurate and up-to-date information, straight from the source."

Messer assures ARMS participants that the confidentiality of their responses is protected by law. "NASS strictly safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only state-and national-level data, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified," she said.

For more information about ARMS and other surveys conducted by NASS, contact the Washington Field Office at (800) 435-5883 or visit the NASS web site at: [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov).

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